

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VALLET 00447 01 OF 05 091551Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SAJ-01 ACDA-10 ERDA-07 AID-05

CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00 EB-07 FEAE-00 FPC-01

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04

USIA-15 SAM-01 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 EA-09

IO-11 PRS-01 PA-02 /150 W

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R 091430Z APR 76

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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 5 VALLETTA 0447

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MT, NATO

SUBJECT: FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH BY PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF.

REF: VALLETTA 0304, 0340 (NOTAL)

1. DURING HIS APRIL 7-8 OFFICIAL VISIT TO GREECE, PRIME MINISTER DOM MINTOFF MADE A MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH ON THE OCCASION OF BEING AWARDED AN HONORARY DEGREE BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS. THE OFFICIAL TEXT OF HIS SPEECH, AS RELEASED BY THE GOM DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION, IS AS FOLLOWS:

2. BEGIN QUOTE "MALTA AS THE AVANT GARDE OF A NEW MEDITERRANEAN"

THE MEDITERRANEAN ENJOYED SOME MEASURE OF COHESION AND EVEN UNITY DURING MANY CENTURIES OF "PAX ROMANA". AFTER THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, HOWEVER, THE MEDITERRANEAN AS A
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PAGE 02 VALLET 00447 01 OF 05 091551Z

REGIONA DISINTEGRATED. THE ANCIENT MIDDLE SEA, INSTEAD OF

UNITING ITS PEOPLES ALONG ITS MANY SHORES, KEPT THEM ASUNDR.
DEEP RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES MADE THEIR APPEARANCES.
A SUCCESSION OF WARS FOLLOWED; LIFE AND RESOURCES WERE WASTED,
THE GREAT LIGHTS OF EUROPEAN AND ARAB CULTURES WERE DIMMED FOR
EVER.

THE CRUSADES FOR A VERY BRIEF PERIOD UNTIED CHRISTIANS
AGAINST MOSLEMS. WITH A HEAVY TOLL OF HUMAN LIFE THE MOSLEMS
SUCCEEDED IN RETAINING THEIR FAITH UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE
OTTOMAN SWORD WHICH ALAS BROUGHT GRIEF AND BONDAGE TO BOTH
CHRISTIAN AND MOSLEM ALIKE. SIMILARLY IN CHRISTIAN EUROPE
SAVAGE FANATICAL ANTAGONISM AROSE BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND
PROTESTANTS. THESE LONG DRAWN-OUT POLITICO-RELIGIOUS BLOODY
CONFLICTS CULMINATED IN THE DEFEAT OF THE SPANISH ARMADA AND
THE EVENTUAL RISE OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

WHATEVER MAY HAVE BEEN THE VIRTUES OF BRITISH DEMOCRACY
AT HOME, THE LEGACY OF HER EMPIRE IN EUROPE WAS A SUCCESSION
OF DEVASTATING WARS - THE NAPOLEONIC AND FIRST WORLD
WARS BEING THE MOST PROMINENT AND THE MOST TYPICAL - WHICH
FRAGMENTED AND DIVIDED NORTHERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE AND THE
WEST AND THE EAST MEDITERRANEAN REGIONS ALIKE. INDEED BEFORE
THE SECOND WORLD WAR - BARELY 20 YEARS AFTER A WAR TO END ALL
WARS - THE DIVISIONS IN EUROPE REFLECTED ALMOST IDENTICALLY
THOSE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN STATES.

3. "THE RISE OF FASCISM"

WHAT PROVED TO BE THE BIGGEST ARMED CONFLICT IN THE HISTORY
OF HUMANITY - THE SECOND WORLD WAR - SAW ITS IDEOLOGICAL BIRTH
ON THE SHORES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN IN FASCIST ITALY. THE
FASCIST FAITH SPREAD TO GERMANY AND WAS RENAMED NAZISM. IT
EVENTUALLY GRIPPED SPAIN AND MANY OTHER LANDS. 1939 SAW THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AXIS OF CONFLICT WHICH DIVIDED THE
EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGIONS IN ALMOST TWO EQUAL PARTS WITH NAZI
GERMANY IN THE MIDDLE OF CENTRAL EUROPE AND FASCIST ITALY
ASTRIDE THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA. 1941 SAW THE AXIS TEMPORARILY
VICTORIOUS WITH PROUD NATIONS, EAST AND WEST OF ITS LINE
DOMINATED AND POLITICALLY ENSLAVED WITH EQUAL IMPARTIALITY
WHETHER THEY BORE THE NAME EUROPEAN OR MERELY MEDITERRANEAN.
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PAGE 03 VALLET 00447 01 OF 05 091551Z

4. "RECENT HISTORY"

1945 WAS THE YEAR OF PEACE WHICH SAW FASCISM
AND NAZISM UTTERLY DEFEATED. THE PRICE PAID BY WEST EUROPEAN
AND MEDITERRANEAN STATES ALIKE WAS INDEED VERY HEAVY: MANY
MILLIONS OF CHERISHED LIVES WERE LOST, THE MATERIAL FABRIC OF
CIVILIZATION WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY DESTROYED; WORST OF ALL

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY WORLD MATERIAL SUPREMACY PASSED TO OTHER REGIONS OF THE WORLD AND THE VIRTUAL CONTROL OF THIS EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION FELL INTO THE HANDS OF THE TWO SUPER-POWERS.

THE TWO DECADES FOLLOWING THE SECOND WORLD WAR WERE THEREFORE MARKED BY THE BLIGHT OF THE COLD WAR WAGED BY THE SUPER-POWERS AND THEIR SYSTEMATIC EXPLOITATION, REGARDLESS OF ALL IDEOLOGICAL RIGHTS AND WRONGS, OF ALL LOCAL CONFLICTS AND DISSENSIONS. THE BACKING OF DEMOCRAT AGAINST COMMUNIST, OF FREEDOM FIGHTER AGAINST COLONIALISM, OF JEW AGAINST ARAB, OF TURK AGAINST GREEK AND OF SO MANY OTHER LOCAL ANTAGONISTS BECOMES THE PRETEXT FOR AN OVERWHELMINGLY LARGE MILITARY PRESENCE OF THE TWO SUPER-POWERS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

THIS VERY BRIEF AND INCOMPLETE REVIEW OF A LONG SUCCESSION OF HISTORICAL EVENTS PROVES BEYOND ANY DOUBT HOW INFLUENTIAL THE MEDITERRANEAN AND WESTERN EUROPE STILL REMAIN IN THE SHAPING OF THE DESTINY OF MANKIND. NOTWITHSTANDING ALL OUR INTERNAL RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL DISSENSIONS, HISTORY SHOWS US MOST CLEARLY HOW INDISOLUBLE, HOW INDIVISIBLE HAVE BEEN THE REAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND WESTERN EUROPE THROUGHOUT ALL THE CENTURIES AFTER THE FALL OF ROME.

5. "MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY"

AFTER 1971 THIS NEGATIVE UNITY OF THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION SEEMS TO BE DEVELOPING - AT TIMES THROUGH POLITICAL CONVICTION, MORE OFTEN PERHAPS BY ECONOMIC COMPULSION - INTO AN ACTIVE EMBRYO WITH RECOGNISABLE THROUGHWEAK FEATURES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

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PAGE 04 VALLET 00447 01 OF 05 091551Z

INDEED SEVERAL FRESH DEVELOPMENTS DO NOW URGE US FORWARD IN OUR NEW MARCH TOWARDS UNITY. THESE ARE:

(A) THE SEARCH FOR A COMMON INDEPENDENT PLATFORM IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS BY THE NINE MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY;

(B) THE EASE WITH WHICH ARAB STATES NOW JOIN IN COMMON ACTION ON ISSUES WHICH AFFECT THEM EQUALLY;

(C) THE GROWING AND DECLARED CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY AND THE ARAB STATES OF THEIR ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE AND THEIR COMMON POLITICAL DESTINY;

(D) THE BELATED ADMISSION BY THE TWO SUPR-
POWERS THAT THERE CAN BE NO EUROPEAN SECURITY WITHOUT
MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY;

(E) CHINAS FIRM CONVICTION THAT A TRULY INDEPEN-
DENT EURO-MEDITERRANEAN CONGLOMERATION OF STATES
WOULD PROVE TO BE HER BEST ALLY AGAINST ANY ATTEMPT
FOR WORLD DOMINATION BY EITHER THE SOVIET UNION OR,
LESS LIKELY NOW, THE UNITED STATES OF ANERICA;

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PAGE 01 VALLET 00447 02 OF 05 091611Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SAJ-01 ACDA-10 ERDA-07 AID-05

CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00 EB-07 FEAE-00 FPC-01

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04

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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 5 VALLETTA 0447

(F) A GROWING AND OPENLY DECLARED BELIEF BY THE
BIG COMMUNIST PARTIES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN THAT THE
EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION CAN HAVE NO LASTING PEACE,
CAN MAKE NO WOTHWHILE SOCIAL PROGRESS, WITHOUT
AFFRIMING ITS OWN IDENTITY, ITS OWN INTEGRITY AND ITS
OWN INDEPENDENCE FROM BOTH SUPER-POWERS. THEY HAVE
DISCOVERED LIKE SO MANY OTHERS BEFORE THEM HOW DIFFICULT

IT IS FOR IDEOLOGICAL SENTIMENT TO OVERCOME HARSH
HISTORICAL REALITY.

6. "MUTUAL INTEREST AND INTERDEPENDENCE"

LET US NOW GIVE SOME DOCUMENTARY SUBSTANCE TO THESE
JOYFUL ASSERTIONS. TOWARDS THE END OF 1971 THE EUROPEAN
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY STARTS TO FORMULATE A GLOBAL MEDITERRANEAN
POLICY WHICH RECOGNISES MUTUAL INTEREST AND INTERDEPENDENCY
BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION. AGAIN
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PAGE 02 VALLET 00447 02 OF 05 091611Z

AT THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY SUMMIT CONFERENCE IN
PARIS ON OCTOBER 20, 1972 THE HEADS OF STATE PUBLICLY
DECLARE THE IMPORTANCE THEY ATTACH TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH
MEDITERRANEAN STATES WITH A COMMON APPROACH AND A COMMON
OBJECTIVES.

COMPULSION FOR SPEED CAME WITH THE YOM KIPPUR WAR
OF OCTOBER 1973. THE ARAB STATES IMPOSED THEIR OIL EMBARGO
ON WESTERN EUROPE AND IN DECEMBER OF THE SAME YEAR OPEC
AGREED ON A SUDDEN STEEP ESCALATION OF OIL PRICES. BUT ALREADY
ALGERIA WAS MOOTING THE IDEA OF EXCHANGING OIL FOR WEST
EUROPEAN TECHNOLOGY. AND ON NOVEMBER 6, 1973 WESTERN EUROPE
FINALLY DETACHED HERSELF FROM THE AMERICAN ALL-OUT SUPPORT
FOR ISRAEL AND WITH ONE VOICE DECLARED ON BEHALF OF ALL
MEMBER STATES THAT "THE SECURITY OF ALL STATES IN THE MIDDLE
EAST COULD ONLY BE BASED ON THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY
COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242 TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ALSO THE LEGITIMATE
INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIANS". THE THAW BETWEEN WESTERN
EUROPE AND THE ARABS HAD THUS BEGUN.

THESE FALTERING STEPS BECAME STEADIER AT THE SUMMIT
CONFERENCE OF COPENHAGEN IN MID DECEMBER 1973. HERE
THE NINE AFFIRMED THEIR COMMON WILL THAT EUROPE SHOULD
SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE ON IMPORTANT WORLD AFFAIRS. AT
THIS MEETING FOUR ARAB MINISTERS ADDRESSED THE HEADS OF
GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE WAY WAS PAVED FOR THE
EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE. SEVERAL PREPARATORY MEETINGS HAVE BEEN
HELD SINCE THEN ONLY TO PROVE WHAT IS NOW PALIN TO ALL AND
SUNDRY, NAMELY, NO DIALOGUE CAN BE TRULY MEANINGFUL AND
FRUITFUL WITHOUT CORRESPONDING STEPS TOWARDS SUBSTANTIAL
UNITY.

7. "MALTA AND NATO"

AT THIS STAGE I BELIEVE IT IS APPROPRIATE FOR ME TO
ILLUSTRATE THE PART PLAYED BY MALTA IN THESE DEVELOPMENTS,
AT THE EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE AND IN EUROPE'S RELATIONS
WITH CHINA.

IN MID 1971 MALTA WAS A NATO BASE AND A KEY CENTRE FOR
THE OPERATIONS OF THAT U.S. DOMINATED ORGANIZATION. SHE
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PAGE 03 VALLET 00447 02 OF 05 091611Z

WAS ONE OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF NATO. NATO FORCES WERE
STATIONED IN MALTA BY RIGHT; THE SIXTH FLEET AND THE SMALLER
NAVIES OF OTHER NATO ALLIES HAD THE FREEDOM OF THE SAFE
HARBOURS OF VALLETTA AND MARSAXLOKK; AND THE ONLY AIRPORT
IN THE ISLAND WAS UNDER THE CONTROL OF NATO. IT COULD EVEN
BE CLOSED TO CIVILIAN AIRCRAFT IF THE MILITARY NEEDS OF THAT
ORGANIZATION SO REQUIRED. MALTA WAS INDEPENDENT IN NAME
ONLY: IN EFFECT SHE WAS A PAWN OF A MILITARY ALLIANCE.

MALTA WAS THUS STILL PLAYING THE ROLE SHE HELD SINCE
TIME IMMEMORIAL: THAT OF A FORTRESS DEPLOYED IN THE INTERESTS
OF THE MOST POWERFUL NATION AT ANY PARTICULAR TIME. HER CASE
WAS ALSO TYPICAL OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN EUROPE AND IN MOST
OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AT THAT TIME: SHE BELONGED TO ONE OF
THE TWO BLOCS DOMINATING THE WHOLE REGION.

BECOMING AN IMPORTANT BASE MEANT IN THE FIRST INSTANCE
THAT TO A VERY LARGE EXTENT THE MALTESE ECONOMY WAS BASED ON
MILITARY EXPENDITURE. AS A BRITISH COLONY, EVERY ACTIVITY
WAS SUBORDINATED TO SERVING THE STRATEGIC NEEDS OF THE COLONIAL
MASTER. WHEN BRITAIN'S DEFENCE POLICY STARTED UNDERGOING A
FUNDAMENTAL REVIEW IN 1957, BRITAIN RUTHLESSLY RAN DOWN ITS
ESTABLISHMENT ON THE ISLAND. AS A CONSEQUENCE, MALTA BEING
AT THE TIME ALMOST A MONO-ECONOMY, MANY THOUSANDS OF
MALTESE WORKERS WERE MADE JOBLESS AND HAD TO EMIGRATE.

BRITAIN AGREED TO GIVE MALTA FORMAL INDEPENDENCE IN
1964. THAT NOTWITHSTANDING, HER MILITARY BASE - WITH ITS
TRANSIENT AND PRECARIOUS ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION MUCH REDUCED,
BUT WITH ITS STRANGLEHOLD ON THE ISLAND'S INSTITUTIONS NOT LESS
FIRM - AND NATO HEADQUARTERS REMAINED. IT WAS VERY MUCH
THERE WHEN LABOUR WAS RETURNED TO OFFICE IN JUNE 1971. THE
WHOLE ISLAND WAS IN FACT A MILITARY BASE UNDER A DEFENCE TREATY
WITH BRITAIN WHICH GAVE OUR OLD COLONIAL MASTERS AND NATO ALL
THE RIGHTS THEY COULD EVER HOPE FOR IN THE VERY CENTRE OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN. OUR IDENTITY WAS DESTROYED THROUGH TOTAL
EXPLOITATION. TELECOMMUNICATIONS, CIVIL AVIATION, SHIPPING,
RADIO, TELEVISION, THE LARGEST BANK - ALL THESE ACTIVITIES
WERE BRITISH OWNED AND MANAGED. OUR COINAGE WAS BRITISH, WE
EVEN HAD FOISTED UPONED US THE BRITISH MONARCHY AND A BRITISH
GOVERNOR-GENERAL. EVEN OUR RELIGION HAD BECOME NEO-COLONIALIST.
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PAGE 04 VALLET 00447 02 OF 05 091611Z

8. "NON-LIGNMENT POLICY"

WHEN WE TOOK OFFICE WE WERE DETERMINED TO DO TWO THINGS. THE FIRST WAS TO GIVE MALTA AS MUCH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INDPENDENCE AS IT WAS POSSIBLE IN A WORLD OF INTERDEPENDENCE. AT THE SAME TIME WE HAD TO MAKE SURE THAT THE PHASING OUT OF THE BRITISH MILITARY BASE WOULD BE THE LAST OF THE LONG HISTORICAL SERIES. IT WOULD NOT SIMPLY MAKE WAY FOR ANOTHER FOREIGN MILITARY OCCUPATION.

WE SAW THESE TWO OBJECTIVES NOT ONLY COMPATIBLE BUT EVEN COMPLEMENTARY TO ONE ANOTHER. WE PLANNED TO LIMIT THE FUNCTION AND SCOPE OF THE BRITISH BASE AND TO CLOSE IT DOWN FOR GOOD WITHIN A DEFINED PERIOD. WE ALSO PLANNED TO HAVE THE NATIONS INTERESTED IN KEEPING THE BRITISH BASE FUNCTIONING TO CONTRIBUTE AS LARGE A PART AS POSSIBLE OF THE FUNDS THAT WERE REQUIRED TO REPLACE MALTA'S FORTRESS ECONOMY BY ONE BASED ON INDUSTRY AND ON THE SKILLS OF HER PEOPLE.

OUR FIRST STEP, THEREFORE, WAS TO INFORM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT OF THE NEW CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THEIR FORCES WOULD BE ALLOWED TO REAMIN IN MALTA. THE SECOND STEP WAS TO TELL NATO TO MOVE THEIR HEADQUARTERS ELSWHWERE. THIS WAS NO EMPTY GEATURE, NO ACT OF BRAVADO, ON OUR PART. THE CLOSING DOWN OF THE NATO HEADQUARTERS WAS ESSENTIAL IN ORDER TO EXTRICATE OURSELVES FROM THE GRASPS OF ONE OF THE SUPER-POWERS. AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAD NOT THE SLIGHTEST INTENTION OF GOING OVER TO THE SOVIET UNION. OUR OBJECTIVES WAS NON-ALIGNMENT. ABOVE ALL WE WANTED TO MAKE SURE THAT MALTA WOULD NOT BE USED IN ANY WAY TO HARM OUR ARAB NEIGHBOURS.

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PAGE 01 VALLET 00447 03 OF 05 091647Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SAJ-01 ACDA-10 ERDA-07 AID-05

CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-02 COME-00 EB-07 FEAE-00 FPC-01

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04

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UNCLAS SECTION 3 OF 5 VALLETTA 0447

THIS CONDITION WAS VITAL FOR THE NEW ROLE IN OUR VISION FOR A NEW MALTA: A BRIDGE BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA; A BRIDGE FOR PEACE AMONG THE PEOPLES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN. THIS NEW FUNCTION COMES NATURAL TO OUR PEOPLE. OUR ISLAND LIES MIDWAY BETWEEN AFRICAN AND EUROPE, MIDEAY BETWEEN GIBRALTAR AND PORT SAID; OUR HISTORY IS A MICROCOSM OF THE MAJOR EVENTS THAT HAVE MOULDED THE MEDITERRANEAN; OUR LANGUAGE IS ARABIC; OUR RELIGION IS EUROPEAN AND OUR CULTURE AND TRADITIONS ARE A REFLECTION OF THE INTERMINGLING OF THE RACES AND PEOPLES THAT HAVE PASSED THROUGH THIS MIDDLE SEA AND LEFT THIER INDELIBLE MARK ON ITS CIVILIZATION.

9. "MALTA'S NEW ROLE"

THIS NEW PEACE-MAKING ROLE IS MOST CONGENIAL TO OUR PEACE-LOVING CHEERFUL, HOSPITABLE PEOPLE. IT IS MOREOVER THE ROLE WHICH GIVES US THE GREATEST SECURITY. IT IS ALSO A UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 VALLET 00447 03 OF 05 091647Z

ROLE WHICH AT LONG LAST SERVES THE TRUE INTERESTS OF OUR NEIGHBORS.

THE LIBYAN ARAB REPUBLIC RECOGNISED THIS DEEPLY AND FULLY EVEN BEFORE 1971. NO WONDER THEREFORE THAT OUR FIRST AND MOST STEADFAST FRIENDS HAVE BEEN THE LIBYANS. IT IS EQUALLY NOT BY CHANCE THAT OUR AGREEMENT WTIH BRITAIN NOT ONLY EXCLUDES THE USE OF MALTA FOR AGGRESSIVE PURPOSES AGAINST ANY STATE BUT CONTINS THE EXPLICIT CONDITION THAT, WHATEVER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT WILL NEVER BE USED EVEN DEFENSIVELY AGAINST ANY OF THE ARAB STATES.

IN 1971, THE MALTESE LABOUR GOVERNMENT, NOTWITHSTANDING THE MOST STRINGENT FINANCIAL CUTS, WAS UNABLE THROUGH ITS OWN RESOURCES TO MEET A DISASTROUS ECONOMIC SITUATION BROUGHT

ABOUT BY THE BACKLASH OF BRITAIN'S RESISTANCE TO OUR DEMANDS. THE FUNDS WERE SO DEPLETED AS TO MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET EVEN THE DAY TO DAY COSTS OF ORDINARY ADMINISTRATION. OF ALL THE STATES WHICH HAD MUCH TO GAIN FROM MALTA'S ANTI-NATO STAND, IT WAS THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL LED BY COLONEL GADDAFI, WHO OVERNIGHT CAME TO OUR RESCUE. IT WAS DURING THESE HECTIC DAYS WHEN THE PEOPLE OF MALTA BRAVELY FACED TERRIBLE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES RATHER THAN GIVE IN TO BRITISH THREATS, THAT THE MORAL AND POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC BRIDGE BETWEEN MALTA AND LIBYA WAS SOLIDLY CONSTRUCTED. AFTER FIVE YEARS OF MEDITERRANEAN AND GLOBAL VICISSITUDES THIS BRIDGE STANDS AS FIRM AS EVER.

IT TOOK THE MALTESE LABOUR GOVERNMENT A VERY SHORT TIME TO ESTABLISH A SIMILAR LINK WITH ITALY. INITIALLY THE ODDS WERE VERY MUCH AGAINST US. ITALY WAS AND STILL IS ONE OF THE STAUNCHEST MEMBERS OF NATO. BARELY A FEW HOURS AFTER TAKING OFFICE, WE HAD DECLARED "PERSONA NON GRATA" THE ITALIAN ADMIRAL RUNNING THE NATO HEADQUARTERS. AT THAT TIME ADMIRAL BIRINDELLI WAS KNOWN IN ITALY BETTER FOR HIS WARTIME HEROIC EXPLOITS THAN FOR HIS NEO-FASCIST POLITICAL CONVICTIONS. THE BRITISH IN BRUSSELS WERE FEEDING THE ITALIANS AS WELL AS THEIR OTHER NATO ALLIES WITH FLESH-CREEPING STORIES ABOUT ALLEGED PRO-SOVIET SYMPATHIES ON OUR PART.

10. "A BRIDGE BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA"
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PAGE 03 VALLET 00447 03 OF 05 091647Z

EVENTUALLY ITALY NOT ONLY UNDERSTOOD OUR FRIENDLY NEUTRALISTIC OBJECTIVES BUT BECAME CONVINCED OF THE SINCERITY OF OUR INTENTIONS AND HOW WELL THESE SUITED THE LONG TERM INTERESTS OF ITALY AND THE ENTIRE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN. NEGOTIATIONS WITH BRITAIN QUICKLY SHIFTED FROM LONDON TO ROME WITH THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT ACTING AS BOTH HOST AND INTERESTED SYMPATHETIC MEDIATOR. OUR NEW ROLE HAD TURNED A POTENTIAL ANTAGONIST INTO A STaunch FRIEND. THIS FRIENDSHIP HAS NOW BEEN TESTED THROUGHOUT FOUR YEARS OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION DURING WHICH ITALY HAS ALSO BEEN MALTA'S BEST CHAMPION INSIDE THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY. THUS WAS LAID THE SECOND ARM OF THE BRIDGE WHICH WE HAD SET OUT TO CONSTRUCT BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE ARAB COUNTRIES OF NORTH AFRICA.

OUR VERY CLOSE RELATIONS WITH LIBYA AND WITH ITALY, NURTURED DURING THE LONG AND EXACTING NEGOTIATIONS OVER A NEW MILITARY FACILITIES AGREEMENT WITH BRITAIN, WERE ALSO INSTRUMENTAL IN RE-ESTABLISHING GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN THOSE TWO COUNTRIES. THIS WAS BY NO MEANS EASY, LIBYA HAD ONLY COMPARATIVELY RECENTLY SHAKEN OFF THE COLONIAL YOKE OF

FASCIST ITALY; ITS NEW REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST REGIME FOUND ITALY'S MEMBERSHIP OF NATO REPULSIVE, WESTERN EUROPE'S PRO-ISRAEL ATTITUDE INSULTING AND THE DOMINATION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN BY HOSTILE FOREIGN FORCES HUMILIATING.

NEVERTHELESS THE RAPPROACHMENT WAS MADE. NOT ONLY THAT, BUT WE EVEN SUCCEEDED IN STARTING QUADRIpartite COLLABORATION, AT BOTH MINISTERIAL AND TECHNICAL LEVELS, BETWEEN FOUR EXTREMELY DISSIMILAR CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN NEIGHBOURS; ITALY, LIYBA, MALTA AND TUNISIA. IN 1972 THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THESE COUNTRIES MET IN MALTA TO SEEK OUR AREAS OF POSSIBLE COOPERATION BETWEEN THEM. THAT MEETING LED TO THE RECOGNITION OF A COMMON INTEREST IN COMMUNICATION, TOURISM, FISHERIES, AGRICULTURE AND THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT; SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS HELPED TO INITIATE EFFECTVE ALBEIT LIMITED COOPERATION.

IN OUR SEARCH FOR A NEW ORDER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN WE HAVE GIVEN PRIORITY TO THE CONSOLIDATION OR THE ESTABLISH-
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PAGE 04 VALLET 00447 03 OF 05 091647Z

MENT OF CLOSE LINKS WITH ALL THE COUNTRIES THAT WOULD ULTIMATELY BE CALLED UPON TO BE PART OF THAT ORDER. WE HAVE DONE THIS BOTH ON A BILATERAL BASIS, AS WE ARE PRESENTLY DOING WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT, AND ON A MULTILATERAL BASIS. MOST VITAL FOR OUR PURPOSES WAS THE STRENGTHENING OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY.

11. "MALTA AND E.E.C."

IN 1970 THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY HAD MADE AN AGREEMENT WITH MALTA WHICH MADE NO ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL SENSE. IT LACKED ECONOMIC SINEWS BECAUSE IT WAS ENTIRELY BASED ON THE REDUCTION OF TRADE TARIFFS. NO ONE BOTHERED TO SEE HOW MALTA WOULD CONTINUE TO FIND THE ECONOMIC STRENGTH TO BUY FROM E.E.C. COUNTRIES. NO NOW ITS OWN DIMINUTIVE INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT COULD BE ENLARGED TO EXPLOIT SOME OF THE VASTNESS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET.

IT IS TRUE THAT THE COMMUNITY REDUCED ITS TARIFFS BY A HIGHER PERCENTAGE THAN THAT BY WHICH WE REDUCED OUR OWN. BUT, AS WE POINTED OUT TO THE COMMUNITY, IN 1971/72, TARIFF REDUCTIONS ARE OF LITTLE VALUE TO A DEVELOPING COUNTRY ESPECIALLY IF, AS IN OUR CASE, THEY APPLY ONLY TO MANUFACTURED INDUSTRIAL GOODS AND ARE SUBJECTED TO STRICT RULES OF ORIGIN. BEFORE A DEVELOPING COUNTRY CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE REDUCED TARIFFS IT NEEDS THE TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL MEANS TO PRODUCE THE GOODS.

MOREOVER THE AGREEMENT HAD NO POLITICAL TEETH BECAUSE

IT PRESUPPOSED MALTA WOULD BE CONTENT TO PLAY FOREVER THE
ROLE OF FORWARD BASTION OF WESTERN INTERESTS AND AT THE SAME
TIME BE FOREVER EXCLUDED FROM MEMBERSHIP. WE DIVULGED TO
A SPECIALLY CONVENED COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING IN THE
SPRING OF 1972 OUR NEW ROLE AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN EUROPE AND
THE ARAB WORLD AND ITS POTENTIAL LONG TERM BENEFITS TO
WESTERN EUROPE. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS IMMEDIATELY
RECOGNISED THE MERITS OF OUR REPRESENTATIONS AND AGREED IN
PRINCIPLE TO GIVE MALTA A NEW DEAL. THOUGH THE NEGOTIATIONS
WERE UNDULY PROTRACTED OVER CERTAIN DETAILS, WE NOW HAVE AN
AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY WHICH EXTENDS COOPERATION TO
INDUSTRY, AGRICULTURE, TRADE, FINANCE AND TECHNOLOGY. WE
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PAGE 05 VALLET 00447 03 OF 05 091647Z

HAVE ALSO BEEN GIVEN ACCESS TO THE EUROPEAN EDUCATIONAL AND
RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS.

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PAGE 01 VALLET 00447 04 OF 05 091713Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

CIEP-02 COME-00 EB-07 FEAE-00 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-15

SAM-01 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

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UNCLAS SECTION 4 OF 5 VALLETTA 0447

THIS WAS A NOVEL APPROACH WHICH HELPED TO SHAPE THE NEW MEDITERRANEAN POLICY - A MORAL VICTORY FOR US WHICH, IRONICALLY, MEANT THAT WE HAD TO WAIT OUR TURN IN THE RESULTING QUEUE. BUT THIS DID NOT DISMAY US UNDULY: THE EMERGENCY OF THE NEW MEDITERRANEAN APPROACH WAS COMPENSATION ENOUGH.

THE TASK WE HAD UNDERKTAKEN IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY WAS COMPLEMENTED BY OUR ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SOCIALIT INTERNATIONAL. LONG BEFRE THE OIL WEAPON WAS WIELDED WE HAD OPENLY REFUSED TO GGIVE ISRAEL UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT. LONG BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS MADE ITS BELATED STAND, WE HAD OPENLY URGED ISRAEL TO GO BACK TO THE 1967 BORDERS. TOWARDS THE END OF 1972 AND DURING THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 1973 WE HAD WARNED THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE IMMINENT DANGER OF ANOTHER WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND AASKED ITS LEADERS SERIOUSLY TO MEDIATE BETWEEN JEW AND ARAB.
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PAGE 02 VALLET 00447 04 OF 05 091713Z

OUR ATTEMPTS TO EXPLOIT THE CONTACTS WE HAD MADE AND THE EXPERIENCE WE HAD GAINED DURING THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS, IN THE CAUSE OF WORLD PEACE AND SECURITY, WENT BEYOND REGIONAL BRIDGE-BUILDING.

12. "MALTA AT HELSINKI"

WHEN THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT INVITED MALTA TO TAKE PART IN THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATITN IN EUROPE WE REALIZED AT ONCE THAT THIS WAS A UNIQUE HISTORICAL OCCASION TO FOCUS EUROPE'S ATTENTION ON THE MEDITERRANEAN; WE FELT ALSO THAT IT COULD SERVE TO KINDLE ARAB INTEREST IN A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH EUROPE.

THE TWO SUPER-POWERS WERE F COURSE MERELY INTENT ON SETTING THEIR SEAL, AND THAT OF THE REST OF EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA, ON CHANCELLOR BRANDT'S NEW STATUS QUO FOR CENTRAL EUROPE. THEY HAD GONE TO GREAT PAINS TO ACHIEVE THIS. OST POLITIK HAD BEEN IN THE BAG BEFORE THE CONFERENCE WAS CONVENED BUT THE MEDITERANEA WAS COMPLETELY MISSING. WE WERE THEREFORE DETERMINED TO GO MUCH BEYOND THIS. WE KNEW HOW EASY IT WAS TT GATHER SUPPORT FOR MEDITERRA EAN ISSUES. WE KNEW THERE COULD BE NO EUROPEAN SECURITY WITHOUT MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY. COOPERAION AMONG EUROPEAN STATES COULD REDUCE THE RISKS OF WAR TNLY IF IT WQS COMPLEMENTED BY COOPERATION WITH ALL THEIR NEIGHBOUING STATES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

WE DID OF COURSE EXPECT INITIAL OPPOSITION TO OUR INITIATIVE ON THE PART OF THE TWO SUPER-POWERS. WE DID NOT HOWEVER GUESS IT WOULD BE SO SIERCE AND FOR SO LONG.

ALL THIS INCREASED OUR FEARS, BLUNTLY EXPRESSED AT THE CONFERENCE, THAT A REDUCTION OF FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE WOULD ONLY LEAD TO A GREATER DEPLOYMENT OF FORCES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. CONSEQUENTLY THE MEASURES OF DETENTE AND COOPERATION THAT WERE BEING AGREED FOR CENTRAL EUROPE HAD TO BE EXTENDED TO THE MEDITERRANEAN.

IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS, THE FIRST PRE-REQUISITE WAS A DIALOGUE WITH THE NON- EUROPEAN MEDITERRANEAN STATES. NOT UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 VALLET 00447 04 OF 05 091713Z

THE KIND OF DIALOGUE THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY HAD STARTED WITH THE ARABS AND WHICH INITIALLY HAD REMAINED INAUDIBLE EVEN TO THE PARTICIPANTS BUT A DIALOGUE WHICH, IN THE WORDS OF AN EXPRESS UNDERTAKING GIVEN AT THE CONFERENCE AT THE INSISTANCE OF MALTA "INCREASED MUTUAL CONFIDENCE".

THE PURPOSE OF THE DIALOGUE WAS TO INSTILL A BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND TO ESTABLISH A NEW RELATIONSHIP. WESTERN EUROPE NEEDS SPIRITUAL AND ECONOMIC STRENGTH TO EMERGE AS AN AUTONOMOUS ENTITY. SO DOES THE ARAB WORLD. THE SPIRITUAL AND POLITICAL STRENGTH CAN BE FOUND IN THIS NEW REALIZATION OF A COMMON DESTINY. IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD THE ARABS COULD GIVE TO WESTERN EUROPE WHAT IT NEEDED IN RETURN FOR WHAT THEY THEMSELVES REQUIRED. ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW AND HUMAN AND NATURAL RESOURCES ARE ALL THERE READY TO BE MERGED INTO A POWERFUL COMBINATION FOR PROSPERITY AND PEACE IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION.

THAT THE SECURITY CONFERENCE HAS NOT REACHED THESE LOFTY AIMS SHOULD NOT SURPRISE ANYBODY. ALTHOUGH THE ATTITUDE SUPPORT FOR THESE NEW IDEAS IS WITHOUT LIMIT, WESTERN EUROPE HAS NOT YET FOUND A CLEAR AND EASY WAY OF DETACHING THEMSELVES FROM OLD ALLEGIANCES AND OLD PRACTICES WITHOUT UNDULY RISKING EXTINCTION. ON THE OTHER HAND THE ARAB STATES FIND IT DIFFICULT TO SINK THEIR OWN DIFFERENCES AND THEIR BLOODY CONFLICT WITH ISRAEL IN A NEW REGIONAL FRAMEWORK THE OUTLINE OF WHICH IS STILL BARELY VISIBLE.

THE RESULT WAS NOT ALTOGETHER DISCOURAGING. FOR WE DID MAKE A START.

THE VIEWS OF SEVERAL NON-EUROPEAN MEDITERRANEAN STATES WERE HEARD AT THE CONFERENCE: ALGERIA, EGYPT, ISRAEL, MOROCCO, SYRIA AND TUNISIA ALL MADE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RELATIONS OF THE PARTICIPATING STATES. ABOVE ALL

THE CONFERENCE DISCUSSED THE MEDITERRANEAN AS A SEPARATE ITEM AND IN THE FINAL ACT OF THE CONFERENCE ALL THE PARTICIPANTS SUBSCRIBED TO A SPECIAL DOCUMENT ON THE MEDITERRANEAN. IN IT

THEY PLEDGED COOPERATION WITH OTHER MEDITERRANEAN STATES AND DECLARED "THEIR INTENTION OF MAINTAINING AND AMPLIFYING UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 VALLET 00447 04 OF 05 091713Z

THE CONTACTS AND DIALOGUES AS INITIATED BY THE CONFERENCE WITH THE NON-PARTICIPATING MEDITERRANEAN STATES TO INCLUDE ALL THE STATES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN".

THE DOCUMENT ALSO COMMITS THE TWO SUPER-POWERS TO REDUCE THEIR FORCES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. THERE WILL NOW BE A FOLLOW-UP CONFERENCE IN BELGRADE IN 1977. WE MUST NOW WORK TOGETHER SO THAT ON THAT DAY ALL MEDITERRANEAN STATES HAVE A COMMON VOICE AND A COMMON WILL.

13. "MEDITERRANEAN CO-OPERATION AND UNITY"

OUR ATTEMPTS TO BUILD MEDITERRANEAN COOPERATION AND MEDITERRANEAN UNITY HAVE NOT BEEN CONFINED TO THE BIG SPECTACULAR POLITICAL EVENTS. FOR US THE COMMON SEARCH FOR PROGRESS AND BETTER STANDARDS OF LIFE FOR ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ARE THE BEST FOUNDATIONS FOR A COMMON APPROACH. WE HAVE THEREFORE TAKEN A VERY ACTIVE PART IN REALLY DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THE MEDITERRANEAN ENVIRONMENT. WE HAVE DONE THIS WITH THE HELP OF U.N.E.P., I.M.C.O. AND ALL THE POLITICAL FRIENDS WHO SO LOYALLY SUPPORTED US IN HELSINKI AND ELSEWHERE. LAST FEBRUARY MEDITERRANEAN STATES FINALLY AGREED TO SET UP A REGIONAL CENTRE IN MALTA TO COMBAT OIL POLLUTION OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA.

IN OUR FORECASTS OF THE REACTION OF OTHER COUNTRIES TO MAJOR RADICAL CHANGE OF ROLE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN WE NAIVELY EXPECTED A SYMPATHETIC AND COOPERATIVE RESPONSE FROM THE SOVIET UNION. IN SPITE OF ALL THE HOLLOW NOISES OF APPROVAL WITH WHICH OUR ACTIONS WERE WELCOMED BY ALL THE WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES NO SUBSTANTIAL HELP WAS FORTHCOMING FROM THIS QUARTER. THE SOVIET UNION'S LASTING GROUND AGAINST THE MALTESE ISLANDS REMAINS FOR US A SOURCE OF DISQUIETING PUZZLEMENT: AS DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST WE STILL CONTEND THAT A STRONG AND INDEPENDENT EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION WILL FIT IN MORE NEATLY WITH ANY MARXIST-LIKE VISION OF A SOCIALIST WORLD.

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PAGE 01 VALLET 00447 05 OF 05 091727Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

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UNCLAS SECTION 5 OF 5 VALLETTA 0447

14. "AID FROM CHIA/

NOR ARE WE ALONE OF THIS OPINION. THE LEADERS OF THE
EOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA SHARED WITH US THIS CONVICTION EVER
SINCE OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER THROUH THEGOOD OFFICES OF PRESIDENT
CEAUCESCU OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLC OF ROMINIA LATE IN 1971.
BY THE SPRING OF THE FOLLOWING YEAR MALTA WAS GIVEN THE
WARMEST OFFICIAL WELCOME GIVEN TO ANY OTHER STATE AND THE
GREAT LATE STATEMAN CHOU EN LAI SIGNED A TREATY OF COOPERATION
WITH US WHICH BEATS IN GENEROSITY AND COMPARATIVE MAGNITUDE
ANY OTHER AGREEMENT WE HAVE MADE SO FAR. IN THE PEOPLE OF
CHINA WE HAVE FOUND CONSTANT AND DISCINTERESTED FRIENDS.

CHINA'S ASSISTANCE IS INVALUABLE TO US FOR THE REPLACE-
MENT OF THE GRADUAL DISMANTLEMENT OF THE BRITISH BASE AND
THE EMPLOYMENT AND FOREIGN EARNINGS MALTA IS LOSING THEREBY.
THE CHINESE ARE DOING THIS BECAUE LIKE US THEY BELIEVE
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PAGE 02 VALLET 00447 05 OF 05 091727Z

OUR REGION STILL HAS A BIG PART TO PLAY IN MANKIND'S MARCH TO PROGRESS. LIKE US THEY BELIEVE WESTERN EUROPE NEED NOT PLAY SECOND FIDDLE TO OTHER POWERS; NOR IS IT NECESSARY FOR THE ARABS TO DO SO. PROVIDED OF COURSE WE ALL HAVE THE SENSE TO GET TOGETHER TO REACH THIS COMMON GOAL.

15. "SUPER-POWERS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN"

WE ARE REALISTS AND THEREFORE KNOW THAT ARAB DIFFIDENCE AND WESTERN EUROPE'S DEPENDENCE ON THE UNITED STATES CANNOT DISAPPEAR OVERNIGHT. WESTERN EUROPE'S DEPENDENCE IS PERHAPS NOT ENTIRELY OF THEIR OWN CHOOSING; GENUINE FEAR OF SOVIET AMBITIONS HAVE THROUGH DECADES MADE THEM ACCEPT THIS POSTURE AS ALMOST NATURAL AND UNCHANGEABLE.

WE ALSO KNOW ONLY TOO WELL THAT THE U.S. FLEET AND THE RUSSIAN FLEET ARE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND ARE LIKELY TO STAY WITH US FOR SOME TIME TO COME. UNLESS WE DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT THEY WILL REMAIN UNTIL IT SUITS THEM TO DO SO AND AS LONG AS THEY ARE HERE THEY ARE BOUND TO DRAW THE STATES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AWAY FROM ONE ANOTHER TOWARDS ONE OF THE TWO POLES OF ATTRACTION.

WHAT WE DO NOT ACCEPT IS THE INEVITABILITY OF THEIR PERMANENT PRESENCE IN OUR SEA. WHAT WE DO NOT LIKE IS THEIR INTERFERENCE IN OUR AFFAIRS. WE ARE NOT AGAINST NATO; WE JUST DO NOT HAVE TO BE PART OF IT. NOR ARE WE AGAINST THE RUSSIANS; BUT WE WOULD LIKE THEM BETTER IF THEY KEPT THEIR FLEET AWAY FROM OUR SHORES. PROVIDED WEST EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN STATES STAND UNITED WE CAN CONVINCE BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION THAT THE INTERESTS OF PEACE WILL IN THE LONG RUN BE BEST SERVED BY THE EMERGENCE OF THIS NEW INDEPENDENT BLOC OF STATES.

16. "CONCLUSION"
LET ME TRY TO SUM UP.

THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION IS STILL SUFFERING FROM INHERENT TENSIONS. APPARENTLY CONFLICTING INTERESTS MUST BE, CAN BE RECONCILED IN THE CAUSE OF PEACE. SUCH A RECONCILIATION SHOULD BE BASED ON A RECOGNITION OF THE BASIC INTERDEPENDENCE
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PAGE 03 VALLET 00447 05 OF 05 091727Z

OF WESTERN EUROPE AND THE ARAB STATES. THE TASK APPEARS DIFFICULT. THERE IS NO GAIN SAYING THAT IT IS. BUT IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE. PROVIDED IT IS TACKLED GRADUALLY AND AT ALL LEVELS.

MALTA HAS BEEN VERY MUCH IN THE AVANT-GARDE OF THIS NEW POLICY FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN. HER PERFORMANCE IN THE FOREIGN

FIELD HAS IN NO WAY DETRACTED FROM HER ABILITY TO CLEANSE HER SOUL AT HOME. WE ARE TODAY A REPUBLIC WITH ONE OF THE MOST DEMORATIC CONSTITUTIONS IN THE WORLD, UPHELD WITH EQUAL FERVOUR BY BOTH SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT AND CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION. WE BOAST OF A MIXED ECONOMY IN WHICH AT LONG LAST TELECOMMUNICATIONS, SHIPBUILDING, SHIPPING, BANKING, CURRENCY AND ALL THE OTHER DOMINATING HEIGHTS OF THE ECONOMY ARE FIREMLY IN THE HANDS OF THE MALTESE PEOPLE. OUR RELIGION IS NOW STRONGER BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN PURGED FROM ANY MATERIALISTIC TIES WTH THE ESTABLISHMENT. OUR TOURISM IS BOOMING AND OUR INDUSTRIALIZATION THOUGH NOT SO SPEEDY AS TO ABSORB ALL OUR UNEMPLOYMENT IS MOVING FASTER THAN WE WOULD HAVE DARED TO BELIEVE IN A WORLD SO BADLY HIT BY THE OIL CRISES, INFLATION AND RECESSION.

I HAVE SPOKEN ABOUT MALTA AT SUCH LENGTH BECAUSE IT IS A SUBJECT ABOUT WHICH I CAN SAY SOMETHING WITH SOME AUTHORITY. MORE SO BECAUSE MALTA AND NOT MYSELF DESERVES TO BE THE OBJECT OF YOUR WARM WELCOME AND OF THIS TOUCHING CEREMOFY. THIS SINGULAR HONOUR I ACCEPT NOT FOR MYSELF BUT AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT FOR MY PEOPLE TO KEEP ON MARCHING ON THE NEW PATH THEY HAVE WISELY CHOSEN. I ALSO VENTURE TO HOPE THAT MY PRESENCE IN GREECE - THE CRADLE OF ALL POLITICAL WISDOM AND PHILOSOPHICAL VIRTUES - THE NEW DEMOCRACY IN A WORLD THREATENED BY NEW DICTATORS - THE MOST CULTURED AND THE MOST INGENIOUS OF ALL EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES - WILL SPUR HER PEOPLE TO STRIVE FOR AND EMBRACE THIS NEW MEDITERRANEAN AT PEACE AND INDISSOLUBLY LINKED WITH AN INDEPENDENT WESTERN EUROPE.

END QUOTE

17. COMMENT: THIS SPEECH IS AN UNUSUALLY FULL AND COMPLETE EXPOSITION OF THE MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY THEMES OF PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF'S LABOR GOVERNMENT. ALTHOUGH IT DOES NOT CONTAIN ANY NEW DEPARTURES, IT IS AN EXCELLENT SUMMARY OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S
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PAGE 04 VALLET 00447 05 OF 05 091727Z

IDEAS AND ATTITUDES ON A WIDE RANGE OF INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, INCLUDING MALTESE RELATIONS WITH THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH ARE IMPORTANT TO MALTA'S PLACE IN MEDITERRANEAN AND WORLD AFFAIRS.
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